

Antti Lahelma

EDITORIAL

Fennoscandia Archaeologica (FA) has lately been facing a ‘positive problem’: article manuscripts and other contributions have been coming in at such a rate that it has pushed our tiny editorial team to its limits. The journal has always been done on a shoestring budget – with a modest grant offered by the Federation of Finnish Learned Societies (TSV), which covers costs related to printing and mailing, but not much else. FA does not have the editorial support of a large publishing house, and has been done by a small number of volunteers mostly outside normal working hours. In the years that I have been involved in doing FA, meeting our yearly deadline of the end of December (by which time the grant must be used) has always been a tough challenge, and with the increasing popularity of FA – evidenced by the contributions – it has become gradually more and more difficult. Last December, we decided that this time it was just a bit too much: if we wanted to maintain high editorial standards making the deadline seemed impossible, and the publication of the present issue (XXXIV) was thus postponed to 2018. However, regardless of the actual publication date, this is still formally the 2017 issue.

Working on a small budget and unrestrained by the demands of large publishing companies has given FA a degree of freedom and flexibility that some of the larger journals perhaps lack, for example related to the word limits of individual articles, the length of the published issues, and yes, also deadlines. Most importantly, this makes it possible to keep the journal ‘almost Open Access’. Even if there is a nominal embargo of six months (dictated by the conditions related to the grant offered by TSV), there is no paywall for articles after the embargo. I suspect it is factors like these, in addition to the fact that FA has done well in journal rankings, that account for the relatively large number of contributions we have received lately.

However, a small team doing voluntary work is also quite vulnerable to changes in workload, whether related to the journal, daily jobs or personal life. At the same time as FA has grown, the Finnish universities have been in a state of turmoil because of recent drastic budget and personnel cuts. The University of Helsinki alone was forced to cut almost one thousand jobs in 2017. These cuts happened to coincide with almost equally drastic changes in organizational and degree structures of the universities, causing a fair amount of extra work for those still on the payroll. As a result, the processing of some article manuscripts has taken far too long, for which I deeply apologize.

We are proud of FA and dedicated to keep it up and running, because it seems to have found an important niche in bridging the archaeologies of the East and West, in highlighting the archaeology of northernmost Europe, and in allowing a wide range of topics – as well as articles longer than usual – to flourish. There is a lot of important archaeological research done in Fennoscandia that probably would not find the light of the day were it not for FA. The issue of workload needs to be resolved, and we are still undecided how to deal with it in the long term, but on the short term, I decided that it is time for me to step aside and let others continue. This decision also relates to a shift of focus in my own career towards Near Eastern archaeology, the study of which has recently received major funding at the University of Helsinki.

Elisabeth Holmqvist-Sipilä and Kerikko Nordqvist will steer the journal as the new editors-in-chief from the next issue onwards. Both of the new editors have several years of experience with editing FA behind them, and a shared editorship is nothing new with FA, where I likewise began my term as a co-editor. Holmqvist-Sipilä received her PhD from the University College London (UK) in 2010 and is specialized on materials science of archaeological materials,

with research networks especially in the Anglo-Saxon world and Scandinavia. Nordqvist, on the other hand, is well-connected with Russian, Scandinavian and Baltic archaeologists, and he defended his PhD at the University of Oulu (Finland) in 2018 on the Neolithic of north-eastern Europe, with a special emphasis on east-west-oriented contact networks. Combined, their ex-

pertise covers a vast geographic, theoretical and methodological scope that continues the broad perspective laid out by the Finnish archaeologist Aarne Michaël Tallgren (1885–1945). His journal *Eurasia Septentrionalia Antiqua* (ESA), founded in 1926, resisted the polarization of east-west -relations, and this is a legacy that FA aims to continue.